Abstract of the Invention

A system and method for personalizing an information classifier is provided. The system includes a default or universal classifier that is pre-trained with features that have relatively universal discriminatory relationships for multiple people and that is operable to produce a measure that a message is classified as having one of several characteristics. The default classifier is intended to classify information at an acceptable level for a general population without requiring additional personalization. The system further includes a second classifier that is constructed and personalized through training *via* a more general search through the space of potentially discriminatory features. The second classifier, after personalization, is intended to classify information at a level exceeding that of the first classifier based on the specific preferences, habits, and desires of the user who personalizes the second classifier. The system further includes a weighting component that facilitates a combining component producing an integrated measure, that a message is classified as having one of several characteristics based on input from both the first classifier and the second classifier. The weighting component assigns a first weight to the first measure and a second weight to the second measure based, for example, on the degree to which the second classifier has been personalized. The system also includes an aging component that can be employed to modify the relevance of messages employed in training the first and/or second classifier and/or information associated with the messages employed in training the first and/or second classifier based on time-based information associated with a message or information associated with the message. The system further includes an adapting component that can change the operation of the second classifier by altering data stores, data structures, algorithms, rules, processes and/or threads associated with the second classifier.

The system also includes a user interface that can be employed to display information concerning the status of the weighting or personalization of the second, custom-tailored classifier. The user interface may also be employed to accept information about preferences that are employed to direct the training and retraining policies for updating the second classifier and for specifying periods of time associated with the aging out of information and retraining.